

IC Staff

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

Executive Registry

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[redacted]
Special Assistant to the DCI for
Strategic Warning
Washington, D. C. 20301

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Dear [redacted]

I have reviewed the Strategic Warning Staff's first Monthly Report and want to commend you, [redacted], and the other members of the staff for a fine piece of work. I was particularly impressed by the Executive Summary--its crispness and clarity in identifying the key issues relevant to strategic warning. I believe the report as a whole will serve well (and more effectively than the former weekly Watch Report) its purpose of alerting the community to those international developments which have strategic warning implications.

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I am inclined to think that the relevance to strategic warning of some of the articles in the report--for example those on Portugal, the US Trade Bill, and Brezhnev's health--is somewhat tenuous. The line between big-W and small-w issues cannot be easily drawn, and there is perhaps some justification for the SWS to err on the side of overlap into the small-w area. I am concerned, however, that in surveying the whole gamut of international developments the SWS not lose focus with respect to its central mission. I would suggest that perhaps the best way of ensuring this focus is to make more explicit in the Monthly Report articles the relevance of each to strategic warning.

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[redacted] in his transmittal note accompanying the Monthly Report, asked my views on its distribution outside the intelligence community. I do not think this would be appropriate. The primary function of the SWS, short of issuing a strategic warning notice,

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is to keep the intelligence community on its toes with respect to strategic warning issues. Its "steady state" products--the Alert Lists and Monthly Reports--are not designed as finished intelligence for policy consumers and, in any event, largely duplicate current intelligence products which are designed for consumers. Of course, I have no objection if USIB principals chose to pass SWS products to their policy-level superiors.

As you are aware, I have asked Sam Wilson to maintain a continuing review of the strategic warning process, and he is planning to discuss with you the points I have raised above. In the meantime, I want you to know that I am most pleased with the fine beginning you have made in carrying out this difficult task.

Sincerely,

/s/ W. E. Colby

W. E. Colby

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